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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 003402

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [KDEM](#) [IN](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: GOI READY TO ASSIST IRAQ, BUT QUIETLY

REF: A. STATE 79107

[B](#). STATE 78774 NOTAL

Classified By: Charge Robert O. Blake, Jr., for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Charge conveyed Ref A demarche encouraging a GOI statement on new Iraqi government on April 30. In a follow-up May 5 meeting, Joint Secretary (Gulf) Sanjay Singh told PolCouns and Poloff that while the MEA was unlikely to issue a formal statement congratulating the new Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG), it was being "proactive" in identifying opportunities to offer training assistance to the new government. The GOI is committed to strengthening the new government and maintaining its strong ties with Iraq, but for domestic political reasons prefers to keep its involvement inconspicuous. The next step is an Iraqi government request to India. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Responding to the ITG demarche (Ref A), delivered also to Joint Secretary (Americas) Jaishankar by the Charge on April 30, Singh recalled India's statement welcoming the January elections in Iraq and stated that while the GOI normally sends a letter congratulating new national governments, it was unlikely to issue any public statement of support at this time. Nevertheless, India continues "proactively" to identify areas for training Iraqi government officials in technical skills. Noting the similarities between India and Iraq's multi-ethnic, multi-religious society, Singh suggested that Indian expertise would be useful in drafting the Iraqi constitution, and highlighted two classes for foreign officials in legislative drafting and parliamentary procedures offered through the GOI's technical assistance program.

[1](#)3. (C) Singh reviewed a range of courses that the GOI had identified as being potentially useful for Iraqi officials, including banking and finance, microcredit and small business development, agriculture, water resource management, railway administration, education, and WTO preparation, and noted that India has already informed the Iraqi Mission of a number of short term scholarships and long term fellowships designated for them to attend these programs. The MEA is waiting now for the Iraqi government to respond to its offer for training, he stated. In the meantime, MEA is drawing from USAID materials shared by the Embassy to identify technical assistance options that would be responsive to Iraqi requirements.

[1](#)4. (C) After PolCouns briefed Singh generally on the possibility of a June conference in Brussels to support the ITG as proposed by the President during his February Europe trip (Ref B), Singh noted the GOI's interest in participating, and stated that both the Secretary during her March visit and the Indian Mission to the EU in Brussels had informed the MEA of that meeting. He asked that we stay in contact as the Iraqi government and conference sponsors agree on the details, so that the MEA can seek political concurrence.

Comment

[1](#)5. (C) The GOI is committed to maintaining its traditionally strong ties to Iraq, and believes that it has useful resources to offer to the new Iraqi government, but wants to keep its involvement low profile for now to avoid stirring up opposition from the left wing of Congress and the Communist parties who support the UPA from outside and view the Iraqi government as an illegitimate product of occupation. The new ITG will need to encourage the Iraqi Mission in New Delhi to follow up on these offers of assistance, particularly as the constitution drafting gets underway.

[1](#)6. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.
BLAKE